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## Spying on the Spot

When it comes to the matter of spying—or intelligence activity, if one prefers that euphemism—we Americans are still comparative Johnny-come-latelys. Until the central intelligence agency was formed and expanded after World war II we had no continuing, large scale intelligence network.

Under such circumstances it is not too surprising if the CIA, as has been charged, did goof in estimates of the situation within Castro's Cuba, and in planning that preceded the recent disastrous "invasion" which failed and put the U. S. on such a spot.

That the CIA did fail has not yet been demonstrated officially, despite all the rumors and reports. Sources just as "authoritative" as those charging the CIA with fouling up the anti-Castro invasion have reported that the CIA's intelligence estimates were accurate, and were such as to discourage the invasion, but that it was carried out anyway.

There is, however, good reason for a top-level inquiry such as retired Gen. Maxwell Taylor is to direct at the request of President Kennedy—not just an effort to fix blame for the Cuban catastrophe, but to assay thoroughly the necessarily secret activities of the big mystery agency. Perhaps it has outgrown its proper activity, and some phases of its functions, now said to include strategy and such, should be curtailed or eliminated.

Considering that our intelligence agency has really been in existence less than two decades, it is believable that it has made some mistakes, one perhaps being acceptance of responsibilities not properly within its sphere. If so, however, they should be examined and evaluated in the sort of inquiry Gen. Taylor is directing, not under the glare of congressional inquiry.

For those Americans distressed by the rumored failures of the CIA it may be of some comfort to know that Britain, which has reputedly had a top-flight intelligence service for many, many years, is doing some soul-searching on the subject of spying, too. In Britain, however, the worry is over betrayal. The British foreign office official this week sentenced to a record 12 years in prison for spying, it is being whispered out loud, betrayed the workings of British intelligence to the Russians.

A real blueprint of British intelligence operations, it has been said, would be worth more to the Russians than 15 army divisions and a very large bomb. Viewed on the heels of other sensational spying disclosures in Britain, this newest scandal has led to a fear that the vaunted British intelligence service must have to undergo a painful, difficult and time-consuming process of reorganization of methods and personnel. The result is that a high-level study of British intelligence is being launched, just as study of our CIA is being made.

Spying, both ours and that of our closest and most important ally, is thus very much on the spot at the moment.